KENTENICH & JEROME KROLL-1957

Father Joseph Kentenich was Jerome E. Kroll
Spiritual Director, confessor, and mentor.

Copyright TX 1-158-755 2-11-2004

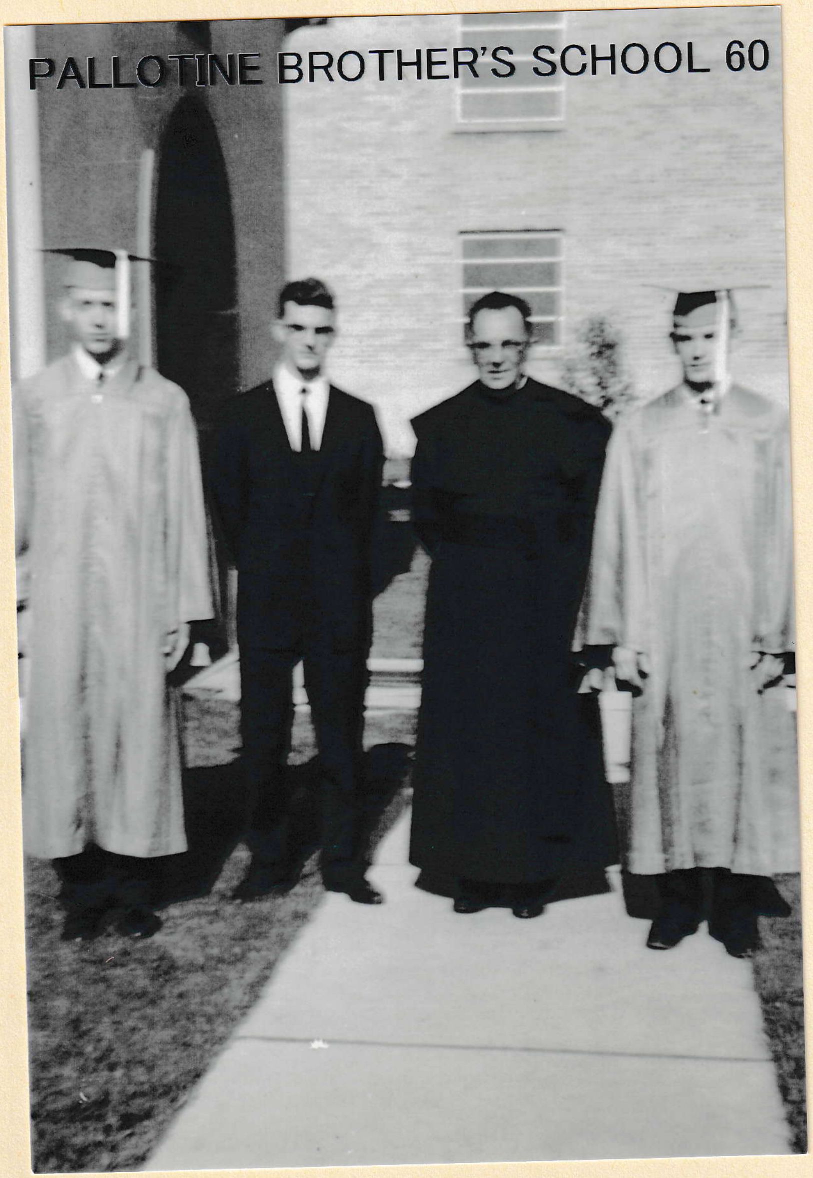
Chaplains to the Milwaukee Institutions

Father lee, father Somer were chaplains to the Milwaukee County Institutions such as the Mental health and Veteran Hospitals. The Pallottine house had a sequential bell system which rang in connection to the telephone system. The call from the hospitals was continual all day and night.

At this time a person dying was usually given the last sacrament and was taken seriously. Father Lee also taught math and algebra in the Brother Candidate School.

Father Somer had other talents and was very good at building and construction. Father Somer is the person who build the Schoenstatt Shrine, remodeled the house chapel, and did remodeling to the second floor of the priest quarters.

Father Somer often had back problems which was painful to him.


PALLOTINE BROTHER'S SCHOOL 60

Jerome E. Kroll to the extreme left, Jerry G., Father Matel Spiritual Director of the Pallottine Brother Candidate School and Dave S. Jerome graduated from Puis XI High School June, 1960.

Is Father Kentenich
a Saint

Since Sister Winifrede always said Father Kentenich was a saint and Jerome saw how many letters Father Kentenich received Jerome tried to determine if Father Kentenich was a saint.

Father Kentenich said mass fast and Jerome could hardly hear him even when he served Father Kentenich mass. Father Kentenich was always late for afternoon prayers.

Jerome had no problem in changing the prayer he was suppose to say to: "Open to me my Father's heart." Jerome even studied Father Kentenich through the court yard window and would see Father Kentenich standing at a desk table.

Father Kentenich did not associate much with the priests. Father Kentenich did not drive, did not relate to animals very well. Father Kentenich seem aloft and always dressed in the same way.

Father Kentenich did no manual work, Father Kentenich seem to like a lot of attention. Father Kentenich seem to need the touch by placing Jerome hands to his heart. Father Kentenich did like to write and talk. His sermons were very long.

Did Father Kentenich whip himself

Father Kentenich had a obsession about purity. He liked white lilies. He was always teaching the prayer of purity: "Hail Mary for your purity...". In the case of Jerome even as a minor father Kentenich always asked about masturbation.

We know that Father Kentenich did not have a lot of personal friends but he needed to touch. In the case of Jerome he always held Jerome hands, always placed Jerome hands in his lap and to his heart. These action must have given Father Kentenich comfort.

Father Kentenich showed Jerome a rope whip and indicated that he use it on himself and suggested that Jerome do like wise. Jerome found Father Kentenich allowing a sister to kiss him. Father Kentenich always saw himself as the Father and others as his children.

Thus Father Kentenich always felt it was right for himself to touch. This all might suggest that Father Kentenich always had trouble reconciling sexual touching and affection.

The Power of Darkness

Father Kentenich had a real believe in the devil that is why he had such a reliance on the believe in the Mother of God. Think about the period in which he lived. Father Kentenich lived through World War I and knew how his students were effected by war.

Father Kentenich lived through World War II and lived in a concentration camp. During the concentration camp Father Kentenich saw men in a survivor mode. Thus if he stay detached and above the frail he could survive.

Actually he became comfortable in this mode and after his release told his followers to live as if they were in a concentration camp. When Father Kentenich was in exile in Milwaukee he lived in this same mode. He was detached from the priests.

He did not depend on them for moral support. His room was small. He could not leave his place of residence. Probably when Jerome got attached to Father Kentenich beginning at age fourteen Father Kentenich also receive human affection which he needed. That is why he always placed Jerome's hands in his lap and unto his heart.

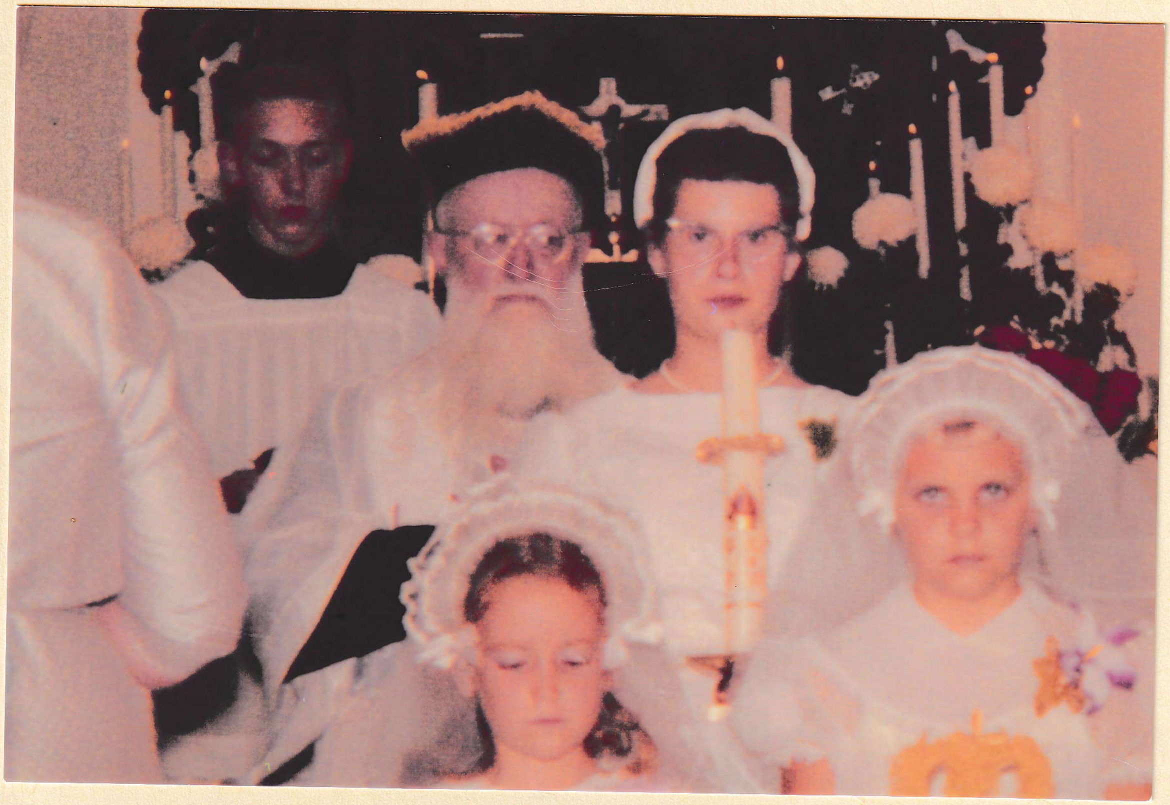
Father Kentenich is disturbed by move.

During 1959 Father Matel decided he needed Father Kentenich large office on the second floor for the Brother Candidate's recreational room.

It was a sudden move and Father Kentenich was not told about it. Father Kentenich new office and bedroom was going to be near the rear east side door. Father Matel one afternoon told several of the brother candidates to go into Father Kentenich office and start moving books and furniture to the first floor office.

Sister Winifrede was in the office and was in shock when the Brother Candidates started moving books down to the first floor. The office on the first floor was small and the bedroom which did have a bathroom was small. The move down to the first floor did not allow Father Kentenich to have any more meetings in his office but these meeting had to be moved to the shrine.

During the fourteen years in exile this probably was the most shocking event for Father Kentenich to endure.



July 8, 1960 Father Kentenich Golden Jubilee
of his ordination. Jerome E. Kroll to the
extreme upper left.

Jerome enrolls at the University of Wisconsin

During August, 1960 Sister Winifrede takes Jerome to the Schoenstatt sister's Mother house in Madison on Cottage Grove Road and gives Jerome a room in the basement next to the dining room.

A bathroom was across from this room. This room was used by Father Brell when he used to come to say mass for the sisters. In this room Father Brell had a bad experience in that he got a heart attack and even though he pounded on the wall no one came to his assistance.

On the first floor was a house chapel a store, and visitor rooms. The day after Jerome arrived Sister Winifrede took him to the University and gave him money to register. Jerome registered for English, Botany, German, Anthropology, ROTC.

Jerome took a bicycle to the university and it took about 1 ½ hours to get to the university on bicycle. German and English was quite hard for Jerome. Jerome usually arrived back at the Mother house about 6:30 p.m. Jerome did study hard and had one sister help him in German.

Jerome did very well in ROTC and climbed roped well. In German Jerome did poorly and the instructor came to talk to Sister Winifrede. One time while Jerome was riding over the railroad tracks he fell off the bike. Sister Winifrede had Jerome do small projects around the mother house. It was interesting for Jerome to see the sisters do exercises outside. Once as Jerome was passing by. Sister Ellen screamed as she saw a mouse.

The Mother house was set very far off Cottage Grove Road. The sister’s property was about 70 acres and was mostly rented out as farmland. The sisters had a large garden and Sister Thomas took care of the garden and cut the grass.

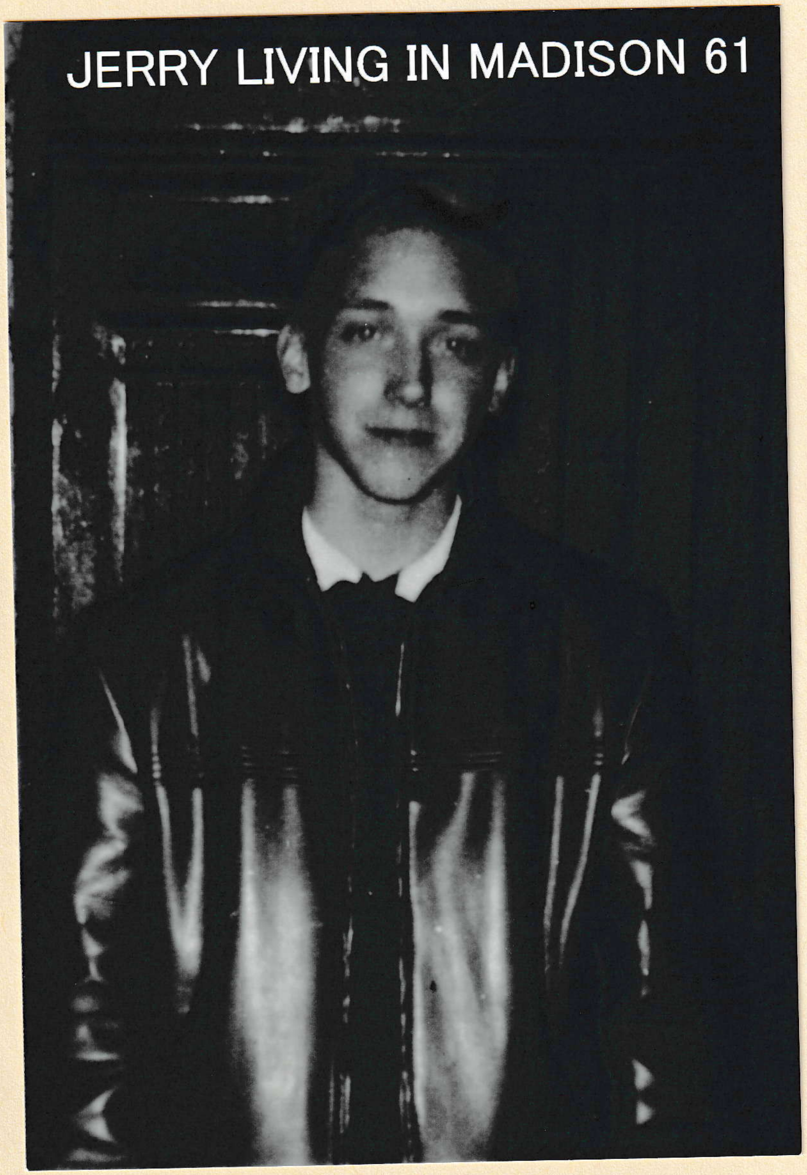
Once when the electricity went off Sister Winifrede told me to go with Sister Thomas to start up the electric generator. As Sister Thomas was starting up the generator her veil got stuck in the blade and her veil came off and the blade cut a large hole in her garb. She was very embarrass.

During the second semester Jerome switched to the Madison Vocational School without telling Sister Winifrede because it was closer and in the winter months it was too cold to ride a bicycle all the way to the university. Jerome took accounting, machine calculating, crafts. The second semester was petty much uneventful.

When summer came Sister Winifrede moved me to the old farm house which was unheated. Jerome got acquainted with a Lady of Schoenstatt from South America and we made some decorations together but the Schoenstatt Sisters were very upset and she was upset and crying because they told her not see me again.

Near the end of the summer Sister Winifrede called Jerome’s parents to pick him up and than He registered at the Milwaukee Institute of technology in Accounting and lived upstairs at my parents’ home at 2452 West Hadley St. During the year that he lived in Madison he visited Father Kentenich once a month. Sometimes Sister took him and other times he took the greyhound bus.

Sister Winifrede came to find out how attached Jerome was to Father Kentenich when she was too deny him access to Father Kentenich. Jerome started crying. From than on Sister Winifrede stated that the relationship between Father Kentenich as himself was “very special”.


JERRY LIVING IN MADISON 61

Jerome E. Kroll at age 19 living at the
Schoenstatt Sisters's Mother house
while attending the University of Wisconsin.

JD '11

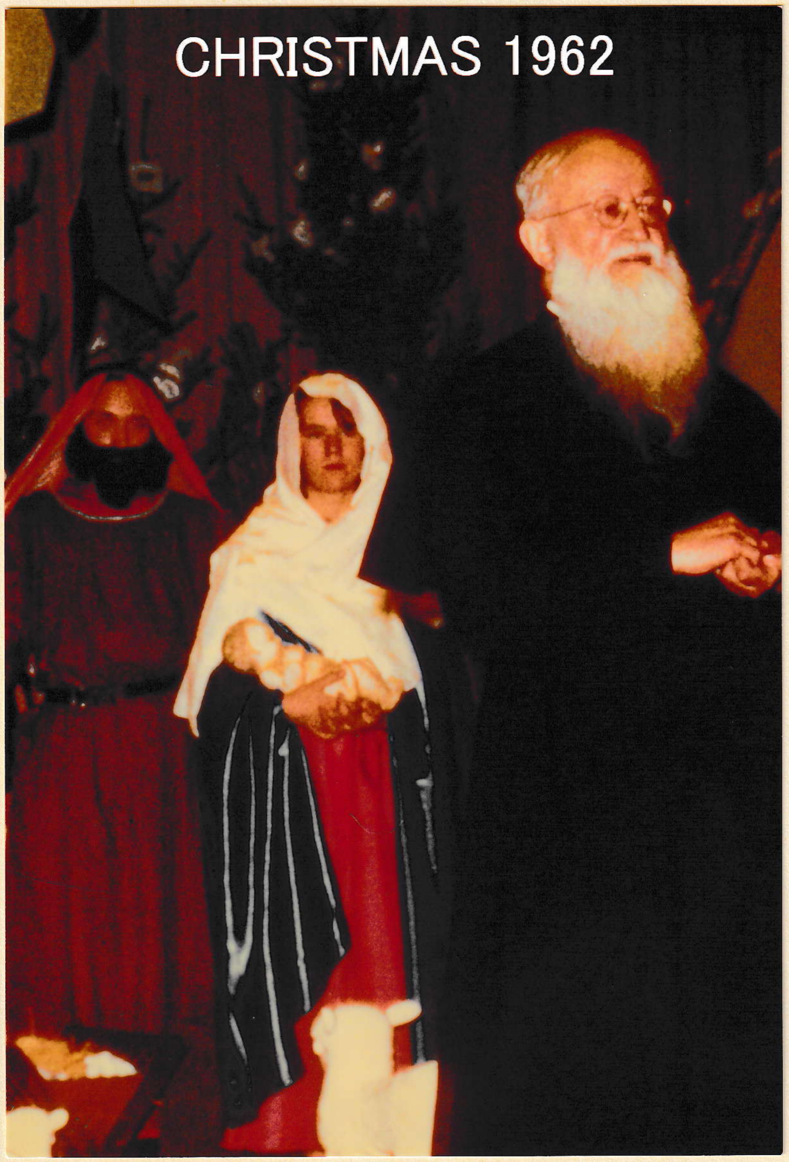
Mr. Halala former
Brother General comes to
live in Milwaukee, Wi.

In about 1960 Mr. Halala a Schoenstatt brother and former Brother General comes to live in Milwaukee from South America. He bought a house near Marquette University on twelve th Street. He worked as an electrician.

Sometimes on weekends Jerome would meet him at the Exile shrine and they walk and talk about the Schoenstatt Brothers. Than Mr. Herberger the present Brother General came to Milwaukee and Jerome talked to him. Jerome told him if he did not go to Germany to become a Schoenstatt soon he would not become a brother. Since it was already three years since Jerome left the Pallottine Brother Candidate School. Mr. Herberger and Jerome agreed that at the end of June, 1963 Jerome would go to Vallendar (Schoenstatt) West Germany.

Jerome use his own money to take a train to New York and go to Germany by ship. On the ship there was a lot of eating. When Jerome arrived in Germany Mr. Herberger and Hans Czarkowski were there to greet Jerome. The first night they all three slept in the same bed in a quest house. Jerome liked Mr. Herberger and made him his Spiritual Director.

Jerome went to Mr. Herberger every Saturday evening and showed him how Father Kentenich held Jerome's hands and said the purity prayer. Mean while in Milwaukee Mr. Halala sold the house to the future Schoenstatt Fathers that is to Mr. Boll, Peter Locker etc. Later Mr. halala got married.



During Thanksgiving 1962 the Schoenstatt Sisters asked Jerome if he would make the scenery for the Christmas play that they were giving to Father Kentenich. Jerome made a shrine. He made his St. Joseph costume and did the lighting. Jerome is to the extreme left. Father Kentenich to the extreme right.

The Final Blessing of Transfer of Charisma

Before Jerome went to West Germany he made Father Kentenich several gifts:

1. A clay Holy Spirit.
2. A clay image of the Law of the Open Door.
3. A painted picture of Father Kentenich.
4. A cake
5. A special garb with the symbol of the bumble bee Sewed on it.

Jerome wrote out a special blessing of transfer of charisma. Father Kentenich did exactly what was written. The ceremony consisted in confession, pouring of water over Jerome hands, and the ceremony of transfer of charisma in a blessing.

After the ceremony Gunter Boll later to be Father General of the Schoenstatt Fathers was invited in to see what happened. Sixty days after Jerome arrived in Germany he performed the same ceremony upon the Schoenstatt Brother course. The course consisted of Mr. Bauer, Mr. Brandsteller, Mr. Hoffmann, Mr. Rosenito, Mr. Czarkowski, Mr. Velton.

Mr. Czarkowski translated it from English to German. As Mr. Brandsteller knelt before Jerome the words of transfer were invoked and hands were laid on Mr. Brandsteller. Thus Father Kentenich last and most important blessing occurred in 1963 or 5 years before Father Kentenich death.

Between 1956 through 1964 Schoenstatt was under church scrutiny.

The relationship between Jerome and Father Kentenich came during a eight year period in which Father Kentenich founding works came under intense church scrutiny.

Father Kentenich certainly noticed the sensitive and deeply religious feelings of Jerome. Jerome spend his entire adolescence years under the influence of Father Kentenich.

Certainly Father Kentenich as a person in exile would feel his emotions concerning the negative accusations harbored against him and the Schoenstatt Movement.

With the attachment Jerome felt toward Father Kentenich and the amount of touching that Father Kentenich did to Jerome . These actions such as laying Jerome's hands on his lap, taking Jerome's hands and placing them on his heart must have relieved Father Kentenich tensions.

We know that when Father Kentenich died in 1968 he died of a heart attack and placed his hand on his heart while dying. It is possible that during the time that Jerome was with Father Kentenich that he had several small heart attacks.

Father Kentenich probably didn't say anything. Both Father Kentenich and Jerome felt very comfortable with each other. Since Jerome was an adolescence it was probably hard for Father Kentenich to keep Jerome's adolescence emotions under control. Father Kentenich was truly happy that a young man like Jerome treated him as if he was his father and mentor.

Father Kentenich's Health
between 1956 to 1963

Between 1956 to 1963 Jerome did not notice Father Kentenich having any illnesses. Thus between age 71 to age 78 Father Kentenich surprisedly never needed a cane.

Never showed any signs of Alzheimer disease. Jerome really never notice how old Father Kentenich actually was. Father Kentenich once fell on the ice during the winter but apparently did not hurt himself.

Apparently all the writing that Father Kentenich did kept his mind active. Some say that during this time Father Kentenich wrote over 6,000 pages. Apparently Father Kentenich mind was very keen. Father Kentenich greatest loss is when all the German books in the attic were thrown out.

Father Kentenich Rehabilitation

Father Kentenich was exile from Germany and from Europe from 1952 through 1965. He was sent to the Pallottine House in Milwaukee for his rehabilitation. It is hard to determine what Father Kentenich was rehabilitated from.

Hard work could be one form of rehabilitation. But Father Kentenich did not do hard work. The Pallottine Candidates did all the work and even served the food.

Denial of privileges could be a form of rehabilitation. Father Kentenich kept all the functions of a priest. Saw Schoenstatt Sisters and had his own secretary. Gave talks to couple groups. Thus it doesn't seem like Father Kentenich was deny anything.

Remove from his homeland Germany. After the war Germany was in ruins. Thus Milwaukee was like a paradise. It doesn't seem like Father Kentenich was deny paradise.

Rehabilitation could come in the form of a educational course. Since Father Kentenich did all the talking it seem like this was not the form of rehabilitation the church had in mind.

The removal of Father Kentenich from Germany at an advance age seems like a harsh penalty. When the word rehabilitation is used it is hard to determine what changes really took place. Father Kentenich stay in Milwaukee was more like a resistance stay than a rehabilitation stay.

Where did all the priests
go at night.

Sometimes Jerome would look out of the third floor window that faced the garage below. Jerome could observe all the cars were gone. The garage could hold eight cars and the doors were always left opened.

On the north side of the building electrical sockets were installed which plugged into the oil sticks on the priest 's cars so that in winter they would start easily. There were another six cars parked on the north side of the house. Thus almost every priest had a car.

Jerome often wondered where did all the priest go at night. Did they visit family and friends. Did they go out to eat? Father Kentenich and Father Meyer were the only priests who did not drive.

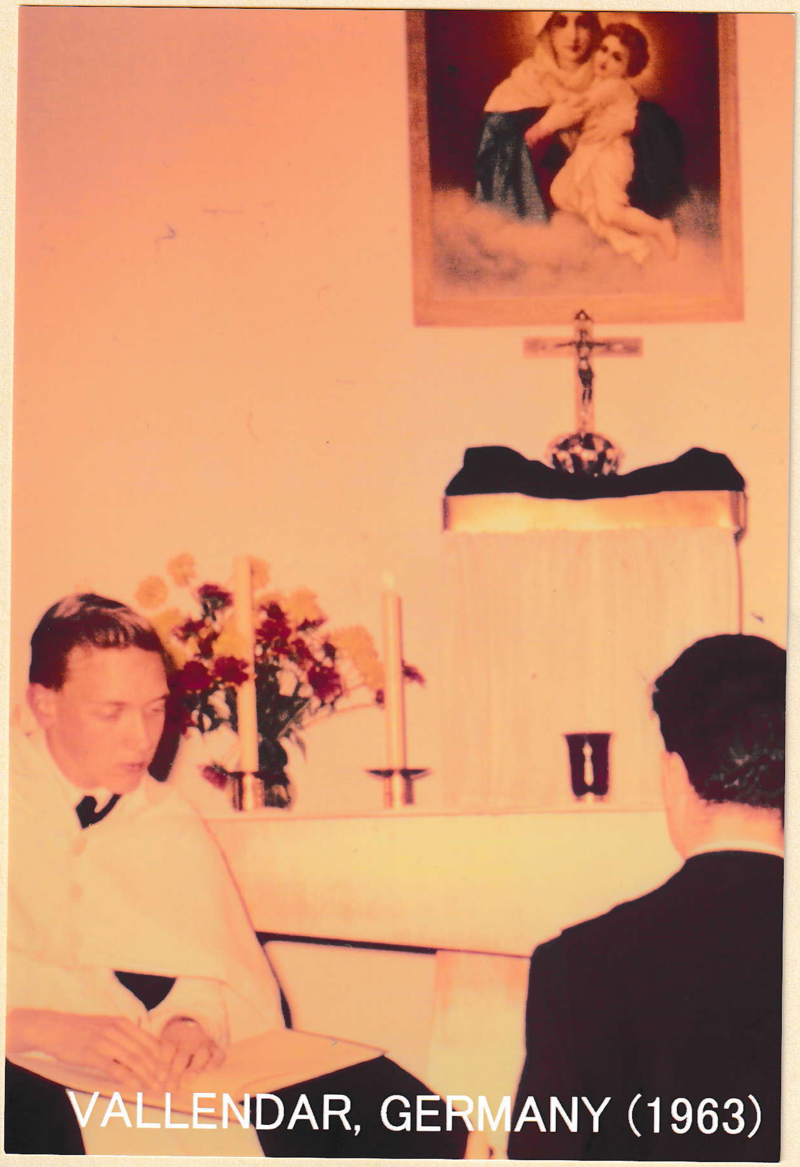
Jerome use to watch one of the newly ordain priest go off at night. In a few months this young priest married and left the priesthood.

Father Kentenich seems to exaggerate his position as father.

In Germany the war broke up many family units because so many men died. Thus Father Kentenich fulfilled a need for many people who needed to belong to some group. When Father Kentenich saw himself as father he was placing himself above others. Therefore they were not equal.

Because Father Kentenich was a priest and could hear confessions he was privilege to hear the weakness in people that he could later use in Spiritual Direction. Thus he was always in a dominating position. Even when he was freed from exile he visited hundreds of Ladies of Schoenstatt and Sisters.

Jerome expects these visits gave Father Kentenich satisfaction in that he was creating attachments to himself or a cult attachment. The question arises how many of these relationships could be classify as affections?



Mr. Brandsteller kneeling before Jerome Kroll (July, 1963) to receive the blessing of transfer of charisma from Father Joseph Kentenich. The ceremony was the same performed between Father Kentenich and Jerome sixty days earlier in 1963.

FATHER KENTENICH 9-15-68

Father Kentenich died 9-15-68 at age 83. Jerome knew Father Kentenich as mentor between the ages of 71 and 78 years old. Jerome realized that Father Kentenich would died soon and thus he honored Father Kentenich through the ceremony of transfer in 1963. Father Kentenich needed to hold hands with Jerome. It just made the journey easier.